

REMARKS

Claims 1-36 are pending. Claims 31-36 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 4, 5, and 18-28 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected species. Claims 1, 7-9, 11, 13-16, 29, and 30 have been amended in this reply. Claims 2, 3, and 31-36 have been canceled, and new claims 37-42 have been added. Claims 1, 4-30, and 37-42 therefore will be pending upon entry of the above amendments.

Claims 1, 2, 8-11, 13-15, 29, and 30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 3,924,918 (Friend). Claims 6, 16, and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Friend in view of U.S. patent no. 4,749,943 (Black). Claims 3 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Friend in view of Black, and further in view of U.S. patent no. 6,838,867 (Loy). Claims 2 and 3 have been canceled, thereby rendering these rejections moot with respect to those claims.

Claim 1 of the present application has amended herein to incorporate all of the limitations of claim 3, and intervening claim 2. Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Friend in view of Black, and further in view of Loy. The Examiner has acknowledged that Loy qualifies as prior art only under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Office action at pg. 3, lines 17, 18.

Statement Concerning Common Ownership

The invention claimed in the present application was subject to an obligation of assignment to Elster Electricity, LLC, at the time the invention was made. The subject matter of Loy was owned by Elster Electricity, LLC at the time the invention claimed in the present

application was made. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that, in accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 103(c), Loy does not qualify as prior art with respect to the preset application under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Withdrawal of the rejections of claim 1 (and claims 6-17, which depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) or 103(a) is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and remarks.

Claim 29, as amended herein, is directed to a method for establishing electrical contact between a printed circuit board of an electrical energy meter and a second component. Claim 30, as amended herein, is directed to a method for electrically connecting a printed circuit board of an electrical energy meter and a second component. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claims 29 and 30 are allowable, for at least the reasons discussed above in relation to amended claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 29 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) is respectfully requested.

New claim 37 includes all of the limitations of claim 7, original claim 1 (the base claim of claim 7), and intervening claim 6. Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Friend in view of Black, and further in view of Loy. Loy does not qualify as prior art with respect to the preset application under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as discussed above. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that new claim 37 is allowable.

New claim 38 includes all of the limitations of claim 6, and original claim 1 (the base claim of claim 6). Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Friend in view of Black.

The Examiner contends that the base plate (60) of Black is a contact blade as recited in original claim 6 of the present application. The Examiner also submits that the receptacle

(62) and the base plate (60) of Black form a pocket as recited in claim 6 of the present application. Office action at pg. 3, lines 4-6. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The base plate (60) of Black is a relatively large, thick structure that holds probes (100) used to establish electrical contact between a test apparatus, and a printed circuit board (417) being tested. Black spec. at col. 5, lines 45, 46; col. 7, lines 5-22; col. 11, lines 16-22. *See also* Figs. 30 and 42 of Black. The base plate (60) itself does not establish electrical contact with the printed circuit board (417), or any other component. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that the base plate (60) has neither the physical configuration nor the function of a contact blade.

Moreover, the probe (100) of Black is disposed in a clearance bore (63) formed in the receptacle (62). Black spec. at col. 23, lines 25-28. The receptacle (62), in turn, is disposed in a through hole formed in the base plate (60). Applicants respectfully submit that the receptacle (62) and the base plate (60) do not form a pocket as recited in claim 38 of the present application.

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that new claim 38 is patentably distinct from the combination of Friend and Black.

Claims 39-42 have been added to further define the scope of the present invention. Support for these claims can be found, *inter alia*, at paragraphs 0043, 0045, and 0051, and in Figures 2A-2D of the original application. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 39-42 include limitations that are neither taught nor suggested by Friend or Black.

For example, claim 39 recites inserting a substantially straight wire pin through a through hole formed in the first component. The daughter contact or terminal (10) disclosed in Friend, by contrast, includes a base (16), a solder tab (18) extending from the base, a pair

of supports (20) extending to one side of the base away from the solder tab, a pivot link arm (22) extending at an angle away from the solder tab, a pair of cantilever spring contact arms (24) to either side of the pivot link arm, and a daughter board engaging hook (26) provided at the free end of the link arm. Friend spec. at col. 1, lines 55-66; Figs. 2 and 3 of Friend.

New claim 40 recites moving one of the first and the second components in relation to the other of the first and the second components while the wire pin is not fastened to the first component or the second component. The terminal (10) of Friend, by contrast, is fastened to the bottom of the mother board (12) by solder connections (34). Friend spec. at col. 2, lines 1-6; Figs. 2 and 3 of Friend.

New claim 41 recites inserting the substantially straight wire pin through the through hole substantially in a first direction, and moving one of the first and the second components only in a direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction. The daughter board (14) of Friend, by contrast, pivots toward the link arms (22) of the terminal (10) and is brought down toward the mother board (12) when the daughter board (14) is pushed to the right. Friend spec. at col. 2, lines 48-52.

New claim 42 recites moving one of the first and second components in relation to the other of the first and the second components to cause the wire pin to contact each of the first and the second components at two locations on each of the first and second components. As shown in Figures 2 and 3 of Friend, the points of contact between the terminal (10), the mother board (12), and the daughter board (14) of Friend remain substantially the same as the daughter board is moved in relation to the mother board.

Applicants respectfully submit that Black is devoid of any teaching or suggestion of any of the limitations of new claims 39-41. For example, Black neither teaches nor suggests

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inserting a substantially straight wire pin through a through hole formed in either of the base plates (60), (70). Moreover, moving one of the base plates (60), (70) in relation to the other of the base plates does not cause the probe (100) (or any other component of Black) to resiliently deflect and thereby establish a contact force.

A notice of allowability is respectfully requested.

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